DISCONTENT

"MOTHER OF PROGRESS"

VOLUME I, LAKEBAY, WASH., WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 1898. NO. 5.

Int. Instituut Soc. Geschiedenis Amsterdam

FREEDOM'S CALL.

A HYMN TO LABOR.

Tune: Webb—The Morning Light is Breaking.

Awake! Ye sons of freedom;
Come at your country's call,
And rescue, with your labor,
A nation from its fall.

CHORUS:

The plutocratic minions
Will do their masters' will;
They'll shoot if you don't rally,
Your manhood's rights to fill.

The conflict now is on us;
Choose you which it shall be—
Your labor or the bullet
To make your country free.
Chorus.

Seldom will be your portion,
Your homes no longer be,
Because when you had power,
You chose not to be free.
Chorus.

The earthquake shock is coming;
The cyclone's roar you'll hear;
But the wave of human passion
Is what you'll need to fear.
Chorus.

Arouse! Ye slumbering people;
Declare that you'll be free!
Work for your homes and loved ones,
And for humanity.
Chorus.

C. L. PENHALLOW.

THE PROBLEM SOLVED.

No. 4.

The "Manifesto," written by Frederick Engels and Karl Marx, in 1847, contained, in substance, the following fundamental and well established proposition: In any stage of human growth the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up and from which alone can be explained the political and intellectual condition of the people at that time.

From this great truth four very important conclusions may be drawn:

1. That the mode of production and exchange prevalent at any historic era must embrace the essential elements of the intellectual and moral education and condition of the great body of the people at that era. For the productive industries and their manifold exchanges are constantly and closely inter-related to all the varied spheres of human thought and activity, and must, therefore, deeply affect all social, political and religious affairs of life; so that the experience acquired through these practical affairs constitutes, really, the great school of the masses in the formation of character. Observation shows us that the common mind of the present day sees things mainly through the physical senses and judges by their daily experience, and has but moderate ability to deal directly with ideas and abstract principles.

2. That only the deep thinkers, the philosophical minds of any age, are able to discern the defects in the prevailing system of production and exchange, and the corresponding social and intellectual condition of the people, as this would require the most critical and scientific examination of the foundation principles of the entire industrial, political, intellectual and ethical structure of society, and, consequently, would be altogether beyond the reach of ordinary minds. To look beneath the surface of the infinitely varied phenomena of the every day practical activities of life and detect the hidden causes, the secret motives, and the basic principles of human conduct, with their legitimate and far-reaching results, is a work quite beyond the power of the masses and can only be achieved by the most favored intellects.

3. So long as there remains any social and ethical defect in our mode of production and distribution of wealth just so long will there be corresponding defects in all our social, political, educational and ethical institutions, and mankind will not attain to universal peace, prosperity and happiness.

4. Since the industrial system reflects fully man's own character, as well as the character of his institutions, to effect any radical reform in society, to make any important intellectual and ethical advancement of mankind, we must strike first and mainly at the prevailing industrial evils, and not at his religious or political institutions, for these are but the natural outgrowths of his mode of industrial life.

Today give society industrial freedom, teach man his equal right to the earth and to all its natural resources, and that he is justly entitled to the entire fruits of his own labor, and the shackles that now bind and fetter will fall instantly like the flitting of shadows, and he will stand forth in the full and conscious dignity of a rational being.

The question may now arise if, on examination, the humanitarian philosopher should discover what he would regard as serious defects in our present social and industrial system, and that the general welfare and advancement of the people required important, or even radical, changes therein! what should be the ethical law, and what the standard of human excellence by which he ought to be guided in presenting to his fellowmen his ideal of the changes necessary to a more advanced social and industrial state?

We may answer:

1. The ethical law is satisfied with the law of equal liberty; that is, any person has the liberty to do whatever he desires, provided he infringes not the equal liberty of any other person.

2. The ideal standard of human excellence is to be reached only by the fullest growth, culture and exercise of all the physical, intellectual and moral powers that man possesses, with the fullest enjoyment possible to a well ordered, rational life and when his associated life in all its relations is based upon the principles of fraternity, equality and solidarity of the human race.

But it must be remarked that this ethical law never can be fully satisfied, nor can this standard of human excellence ever be fully attained except in a society formed of perfect men. Yet, as ideals of the perfect law and perfect man, they must ever be the guide of the philosophic philanthropist in all his efforts to advance the well being and happiness of his fellowmen. For all the heroic work done for human progress in the past, by saint and martyr, and the still more glorious work to be done in the future, was, is and will be the EVOLUTION of the PERFECT MAN and the PERFECT WOMAN. This is the ONE grand end of human life. All else is but means. And, therefore, any attempt at changing the present mode of economical production and exchange that may in any way improve both the material and moral condition of the industrial classes of society must be welcomed by every right minded man and woman. Yea, it would be their duty to put forth their most earnest efforts in aid of all such reform movements, as their object is to establish more favorable opportunities for the evolution of better and nobler men and women.

This work is the "GREATEST GOOD" that can be accomplished for humanity, in comparison with which any sacrifice of money, or "vested interests" of the millionaire, or of high position of the politician, weighs not a mite.

Now, in the light of these foregoing principles pertaining to human life and duty our discussions of the prevailing mode of production and exchange will be made. In our next article we shall call the reader's attention to the subject of Interest paid for the use of money.

Lakebay, Wash. E. C. MILES.

A MAN'S LIFE.

Man's life is full of crosses and temptations. He comes into the world without his consent and goes out of it against his will, and his trip between the two eternities is exceedingly rocky. The rule of contrariness is one of the important features of the trip. When he is little the grown girls kiss him and when he is grown the little girls kiss him. If he raises a large family, he is called mustard, but if he raises a small check, he is a thief and a fraud and shunned like a Chinaman with the seven year itch. If he is poor, he is a bad manager; if he is rich, he is dishonest; if he is in politics, it's for pie; if he is out of politics, you can't tell where to place him, and is no good to his country; if he does an act for charity, it is for policy; if he won't give to charity, he is a stingy cuss, and lives only for himself; if he dies young, there was a great future ahead of him; if he lives to an old age, he was missing his calling. He is introduced to the world by a doctor, and to the next world by the same process. Verily, the road is rocky, but man likes to travel it.—Free Lance.

Where there is no vision, the people perish.—Emerson.

EMMA GOLDMAN.

If the comrades in Seattle and Tacoma only knew what they have lost by not making more strenous efforts to arrange meetings for Emma Goldman they would never forgive themselves.* A kind providence only saved us from a similar fate; to tell the truth, we were rather indifferent about her coming here.

I personally had an idea that she was akin to these woman rights lecturers who weary the souls of all men, but instead of that we found her to be a jolly comrade, a good looking, sensible girl, who is even not averse to a little flirtation, and a sympathetic woman with a heart so large that it embraces the whole world. Though the audiences at her lectures were rather small (due to the numerous political meetings held at the same time) they were enthusiastic and responded liberally to Comrade Addis' appeal to assist us in meeting the expenses.

The best political speakers of the United States are at present in Portland, but none approach our comrade in eloquence. Her words carry conviction to the hearts of the hearers, and she has scattered seeds many of which will bear fruit in due time.

Personally, I think the greatest benefit we have derived from her presence here is in shaking up the older comrades, in arousing them from their beds of ease on which they were only too willing to rest from imaginary labors.

We all feel better for her having been here and are sorry she could not remain longer. She spoke three nights in succession. "The Woman Question," "Authority Versus Liberty," and "Patriotism" were the subjects of her lectures. There is no conservatism about her, she is as radical as anyone in the west.

Her appearance on the stage is pleasing; her gestures are natural, and with her tasty dressed, well-built, petite figure and blonde hair she makes a fine picture. Her voice is strong and her pronunciation distinct.

Thanks to the untiring energy of Comrades Addis and Christ the financial part of her meetings here was highly successful—no small item these times.

Her reception was rather cold, but in the short time she stayed here she won the affection of all who had the good fortune to come in contact with her, and her departure was as that of a long-known, dearly-beloved friend.

It will interest the comrades on the sound to know that she has promised to visit us again next spring. May meanwhile a kind providence smile on her and keep her safe and well for her next visit. CHAS. DOERING.

*The comrades at Tacoma secured a hall and had meeting advertised, but Comrade Goldman cancelled the engagement. We do not feel as if we had been derelict in the matter. O. A. V.

Life alone can impart life; and though we should burst, we can only be valued as we make ourselves valuable—Emerson.

DISCONTENT.

"MOTHER OF PROGRESS."

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AT LAKEBAY, WASH.

50 Cents a Year.

Address all communications to DISCONTENT, Lakebay, Wash. Make all money orders payable on Tacoma, Wash., to O. A. Veritv.

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW, ? ? ? ?

As the beliefs we try to place before the world cannot all, or nearly all, be condensed in one issue of this publication we request that those into whose hands a copy of DISCONTENT may fall, and who wish further enlightenment on our aims, send us any inquiries on these subjects, and we will, from week to week, try to satisfy all real desire for information so far as our powers will permit. DISCONTENT.

—:—:—

WAR TALKS.

A desire to see what class of men were offering their bodies as targets for bullets on behalf of army contractors and national bondholders led me to take a trip to the Presidio last Sunday where I found several thousand of Uncle Sam's boys in blue encamped.

The site of the camp was a sandy waste across which the wind swept the dust in clouds, but this was nothing, as the soldiers were on exhibition before all the sentimental fools who dote on uniforms and other trappings of flunkeydom. And the boys dearly loved their emblems of servitude and were not at all averse to flattery. Indeed, war was a nice thing!

But the next week was a foggy one, and the camp was so situated as to get the full benefit of the fogs as they rolled up from Golden Gate harbor. Then came a day of nasty rain, and oh! it was "different in the morning." No dress parade and no languishing ladies splashing around in the mud to dote on the sickly suckers who had not even smelled burning powder as yet.

***

The cheap heroes of a day soon found that though the capitalist press was ready to flatter their vanity by indiscriminately calling any and all who wore a uniform "heroes," it was not such fun as it might be after all.

***

It was all well enough to read in the United States histories (so-called) the records of barbarity which the alleged historians imposed upon a confiding public as the "history" of a mighty nation. We've all (or mostly all) read the bloody record of America's official murders done by wholesale, always on behalf of "Liberty," "Freedom," and other things which sound nice to catch gudgeons with, but which no American army (or any other) ever yet fought.

We've read these, and, in our ignorance of the real motives of the hidden players upon the keys of the automaton, our nerves have caused a tingling sensation of patriotism to play over our cuticles like waves of that other emotionalism—religion.

***

And that that corrupt and unreliable history, the history only of force, chicanery and fraud, never of real progress in a nation, has been well relied upon by the ruling classes to teach patriotism to the unsophisticated youth of the land was shown by the personnel of the volunteers who made up the companies encamped at the Presidio.

Have you read the eulogistic daily organ's comments on the brawny toilers who compose the volunteers? Then you have read the grossest of lies. On the whole the recruits are pale-faced youths, many of whom appear barely to have reached their sixteenth year. Youths who should still be in schools—not the lying schools of today, which induce them to offer themselves to a false and lying idol as a sacrifice.

***

Among an hundred or more who were lined up among the applicants for enlistment as volunteer defenders of corruption barely half a dozen had passed their thirtieth year, and every one of these bore the unmistakable stamp of soldiers in the vast army of the unemployed. Where was the idle boast of the daily liars that millions were eager to volunteer for war? These vast hordes of volunteers-to-be were slimly represented, indeed, at the Presidio among the men who had brushed up against the rough side of life as it really is in America. They know too well the sham and the hollowness of the false patriotism that has been instilled like deadly poison into the brains of the inexperienced youth of America. This explains the predominance in the army today of school children drilled by church and state in the refined art of murder.

***

Surely the much-maligned dime novels could have taught no worse lessons to the American youths than have been taught them by the state in the bogus, or at best inaccurate, "history" of America's past.

***

Already the volunteers are squealing lustily over the quality of their rations as well as of the cooking. Some of them declare that the food is such as they would never offer to the dogs they left at home. And they also complain that they had no blankets for several nights. What will they do when they get into actual war? Perhaps they will acquire some sense.

***

And the kicks are not confined to the privates. Even General Merritt, who will command the forces sent to the Phillipines, has revolted. He declines to go with nothing but greenhorns at his back. And now all of the patriotic greenhorns are terribly insulted. Possibly they begin to appreciate the difference between soldiers and officers. If they do not now they will before they get very far.

***

There is another feature of this war that no student of humanity can overlook when it comes before his eyes. It is the most glaring piece of animated sarcasm the mind of man could possibly conceive. I refer to the Red Cross worn upon the sleeve of a soldier in uniform. The Red Cross is presumed to be emblematical of mercy. But it is a mighty peculiar brand of mercy that first provides for the killing and maiming of fellow men before providing for healing the wounds made, or putting a salve on them. Common "horse sense" would teach that an ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure, but not only does the soldier not seek to prevent, but his business is to CAUSE the cuts, slashes and broken bones, which he afterwards "mercifully" binds up.

And this hypocrisy is instilled into the minds of the school children by sending them to their parents to beg a dime for the work of the Red Cross. Would it not be simpler and more sensible to stop teaching them the fine art of murder? There is still enough of the wild beast left in the human family without innoculating the youth with more of the virus?

From a humanitarian standpoint the answer will, of course, be in the affirmative, but governments are not conducted on humanitarian lines. That is not their mission, though it may be their boast. The day that witnesses the extinction of the army, and consequently the soldier, will see the beginning of the end of government, and of this fact the ruling classes are well aware. Hence the tendency to increase rather than diminish the standing armies of the world.

But slowly the people of all countries are awakening to the fact and government bills to increase army budgets are generally becoming more stubbornly contested by even the bourgeoisie parliaments. In this country the Hispano-American war secured for General Miles the much-coveted increase of the American army. This fact casts a suspicion upon the real motives of the bringing about of the war. Certainly it was not an act of vengeance on behalf of the sailors of the "Maine"; it was too long delayed for that.

San Francisco. F. A. COWELL.

—:—:—

WHAT WAS IT?.

MR. EDITOR: What was it? It came from Boston. "Equal Freedom" it called itself. Will some folks never learn that barking, and caterwauling, never makes argument, and that common-sense statements are always treated with courtesy by the intelligent reader, and that self-evident truths are never taken for a "jingle of words"?

O, if would-be critics could only see themselves as others see them. Why will amateurs insist on dealing with problems too weighty for their dull brains to comprehend?

When a man rushes into print to criticise others because they like bananas, wear shoes, or write verses, you can make up your mind that he has something sour on the stomach, and he is working to get rid of the bile.

Probably Wm. A. Smith is a new fledgling in the literary field seeking for honors. At least, I don't remember having met his name in print before.

His manner of introducing himself to strangers is unique, and his method of attack would put a Hottentot to the blush for its boldness. He doesn't understand the "jingle of rhythm" (as he puts it), yet he seems to have the intellectual measurement of poets, from the beginning of time. He is a rare and novel specimen of know it all in this poor sleeping world. Don't see how we all got along without him previous to his advent among us.

I was somewhat puzzled to understand what a man's poetic taste had to do with the definition of freedom, but I suppose he understood, and that was all sufficient.

Now, I hope my festive critic will not be offended at a little plain speaking if these lines should meet his eye. I am of the honest opinion that freedom is a lost word to him. I put no annex to the word, simply say freedom.

To define freedom, one cannot stop at half measures; freedom means absolute, without constantly saying it, so when I use the term hereafter let it be understood that I mean the whole, complete, absolute, without a slice taken off, etc.

Freedom means the assertion of the human will without let or hindrance. Any infringement on this would be a violation of freedom. "Equal Freedom" is a meaningless term, for to equalize would necessitate laws of restriction, force, government. Hence equal freedom and equal slavery are synonymous.

But as all minds are not capable of grasping this at one sitting the weaker ones deny it and criticise rather than investigate. Of course, we are not obliged to view things alike—that is anarchistic. The right to think as one pleases is the most sacred prerogative of the individual, and cannot be infringed, despite the imaginary string friend Smith is out fishing with.

No, all poets are not thinkers, and it is equally true that all critics are not philosophers, so much for a play at words.

All men can cultivate thought if they try, but some cannot comprehend truth in a lifetime—hence the slow growth of anarchistic ideas.

From the pen of my Bostonian critic (and he assumes to be a man of judgment in the scientific world) I read the following: "There is but one perfect concept of absolute freedom, and that is absolute isolation, and absolute isolation means death." What a wonderful gift of foresight is here. So in the absence of authority freedom must perish; poor freedom.

Now, when he declares that we can have no conception (ignore perfect) of absolute freedom only through the nightmare of complete isolation, it is tantamount to the idea that nature is but secondary, therefore, must cease to exist when artificial laws are abolished. The man affects to be an Anarchist, but we are all liable to mistakes, and my conception of the word leads me to believe that he is no exception to the common rule. He is on some superficially explored theory and mouthpiecelessly mixed with terms. But he will some day get out of knee pants into long trousers; give him time; and I, for one, will hail the day he climbs out of the little, narrow, circumscribed rut he seems to be so helplessly wedged into.

Now, in conclusion, I make no claim of knowing what my neighbor wants for his own happiness better than himself, and would not, if I could, persuade him to yield up or sacrifice anything for my benefit. Therefore, if my neighbor sees fit to hedge in his convictions with safeguards I shall not object, but I insist that he shall put no string on my freedom, thereby withholding me from working my own destiny after the pattern of my own thoughts. I say to the world mind your own business, and permit me to mind mine. The crowd may tie itself to a hitching post if it will, but hands off of me.

I hail from a school essentially the same as that of Michael Bakounin. I would abolish law and dethrone all ideal systems, that is, all external authority that places itself above the individual. I hold that laws of restrictions are meddlesome interferences with human happiness. It matters not whether it comes through king, politician, or universal suffrage; authority is, and ever has been, destructive to the best interests of humanity. I advocate the doctrines of Kropotkin and Elisee Reclus. I demand freedom, the most absolute that is possible under the natural law.

Maywood, Ill. L. S. OLIVER.

LOVE, MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.

In its most literal sense love is the dynamic of procreation. If men vegetated, or if they were reproduced parthenogenetically, that is without the conjunction of male and female, as is the case among some of the lower forms of life, there would be no love. Love may, therefore, be defined as that power which brings the male and female together for the continuation of their species. It is universally in operation; and, next to the instinct of self-preservation, it is the most powerful of motives.

In a state of nature all animals and plants, except those which reproduce themselves from virgin females—without the intervention of the male element," are polygamous. Some plants are fertilized by the winds blowing the pollen or fecundating cells from the male to the female flower; while among fishes the females deposit the larvæ, or eggs, which the male subsequently fructifies. Now, if the monogamic, or one love, idea were natural, the same male flower would continue to furnish the pollen to the same female flower, and the same male fish would follow the same female fish up the rivers, which would necessitate the winds blowing in a uniform direction and the possession of a well organized memory by the fish and the formation of habits which would in no way accord with his acquatic life. Thus it is to be seen, since all of the creatures of nature, whether we under-tand by nature, god or force, are produced by a uniform and invariable law, that polygamy is altogether natural.

Man has found it to his interest and his pleasure to institute the monogamic relation. On account of a more highly organized memory men are capable of prolonging indefinitely the association that results from sexual attraction. In man, therefore, love develops affections, which give rise to the home and those relations which are the chief pleasures of human existence.

Nature does not care whether man derives pleasure or pain from the propagation of his kind. The lives of thousands of mothers are sacrificed, and as many men die from the contraction of loathsome diseases. As water runs down hill, so are male and female attracted to each other; and as nature cares not whether the water washes up gold, or sweeps the habitations of men away, so she does not care whether the child is to be a 12-pound boy, and the pride of his father's heart, or a still-born monstrosity that fills him with horror.

The fictions of poets have surrounded love with a halo of glory, and have taught us to believe (for which we should thank them) that there is something divine and altogether supernatural in the performance of a simple function. If I may speak of nature as a person, I may say that she is more interested in the species than in the individual. She creates in abundance, making allowance for waste. If all the eggs of fishes were to mature there would soon not be room in the seas for its inhabitants; and if accident and art did not contribute to restrain the multiplication of the human species the earth would soon be overpopulated. It will never be known why nature produces her countless children, to whom she is the most indifferent mother imaginable. According to science the sum total of all existence will result in nothing, and if we deny the existence of a god, for whose pleasure all things exist, the universe utterly fails of a purpose. But even then we cannot assure ourselves of the pleasing hope of immortality. For what becomes of the fructified ova that perishes before it is developed? Imagine, if you can, so much raw material (of which our bodies are composed) on the one hand, and so much force (which we call mind or soul) on the other, and then try to conceive the manufacture of the force into a countless number of immortal souls through its temporary residence in a given quantity of matter. Before our bodies were formed, that is before the matter was individuated into what we call our bodies, it was a part of the common whole; and since nothing new was brought into the world with our existence, it is also true that before our minds were formed, that is before the force was individuated into what we call our minds, it was contained in the common whole Hence, since our bodies at death return to the common whole of matter, which is indestructible, and lose their identity, nothing is more certain than that our minds also at death return to the common whole of force, which is also indestructible, and lose their identity. I am thus forced into idealism, or the denial of the existence of matter, and into the assertion that all is mind or god, the end of whose existence is its, or his, own pleasure.

In no other way can I have a rational conception of love. And even then the conception is not complete; but for completion I do not hope, since it is impossible for the mind to fathom itself. If my reasoning is correct I may construct a system of ethics, or right living.

The foundation of this system is that the object of love is pleasure. I do not mean alone that gross pleasure that man shares with the hog, but the sum total of pleasurable emotions, which we call a happy life. In love there is no duty, for love obeys itself alone. It exists for nothing but itself. The combined forces of the universe cannot impel the frailest woman to love against her will. From this I draw a most important conclusion, namely, that the relation of the sexes should be perfectly free. In order to divorce himself a man should have nothing more to do than to take up his hat and leave. Marriage is simply a declaration for the convenience of society that a certain man and a certain woman, already in love, wish to fulfill it. The marriage ceremony, therefore, should consist of nothing more than a simple declaration; for there is absolutely no use for a ceremony unless it is intended to force people to live together, whether they love each other or not. I do not even think that I am bound to announce my marriage; let society observe the fact. I did not announce the publication of the Autonomist; I published it.

Freedom is the very life of love. And freedom can in no way be subject to human decree. I am thus a "free lover," but I am not a polygamist. I think that the love of one man for one woman is in the highest degree ethical; although I am willing for every other man to love as many as he wishes to, or none at all. Passionately, that is as an animal, I am polygamous; but poetically, or as a man, I am monogamic. I have no use whatever for a harem as a permanent institution. And while I am so constituted that I can break the seventh commandment as easily as most men who are in good health, still I find it impossible to love more than one woman at a time—that is, to derive the sum total of pleasurable emotion of existence I need but one. Shelley has sung:

> I never was attached to that great sect,
> Whose doctrine is that each one should select,
> Out of the crowd a mistress or a friend;
> And all the rest tho' fair and wise commend
> To cold oblivion; though 'tis in the code
> Of modern morals, and the beaten road,
> Which those poor slaves with weary footsteps tread,
> Who journey to their home among the dead.
> And thus with one chained friend, perhaps, a foe,
> The dearest and longest journey go.
> True love differs from this, like gold from clay,
> That to divide is not to take away.
> 'Tis like thy light imagination
> Which grows beautiful, gazing on many truths.

As far as I am concerned Shelley was wrong. Poetically, he was wrong. Scientifically, or naturally, he was right. Natural love is merely passion. It is the merest indulgence of coarse appetite, and in no way conducive to the purest pleasure. It is good enough, perhaps, for the most of men and the lower animals, but they miss the most delightful of all emotions—the emotions that are born of the associations hallowed by time, which spring like the fairest of flowers from the depths of the heart, where they are watered by the tears of sorrow. The multitude are strangers to these emotions, just as they are strangers to the gifts of genius, and those burning aspirations which consume if unfulfilled.

That the most of marriages are failures there can be no doubt. Nature makes more failures, from the human standpoint, than successes. She produces more clods than diamonds, more ignorance than wisdom. There are happy marriages, but they are konihoors. To live happily together the man and woman must coalesce; they must harmonize in a condition of absolute and equal freedom.

For the unhappy marriage there is no remedy. It is useless to try and mix oil and water. The most of people are, therefore, foolish to marry. It is only the few who are capable of real union. The most of men and women are too near the earth—they have too much of the chthonic and not enough of the platonic. You may laugh at Plato, but he was right. When the most of men see a pretty woman, what are their thoughts and remarks? * * * *

Don't you know that the more brilliant the blaze, the sooner it expires? For the benefit of the multitude, therefore, divorce should be made easy. Do you expect the idiot to master the lessons of a genius? Then why should you expect the common lover to be "true until death?"

The institution of marriage was born of greed. Marriage came about in this way: "A robber would accumulate property. At his death all those who were supposed to be his children would claim it. Their quarrels disturbed society. The idea of primogeniture, or the inheritance of everything by the first born, suggested itself. In order to be certain of his own children, and especially of him who was to inherit, at least one wife of the ancient marauder had to be "faithful." If she was not, she was punished with death. The old robber had several other wives besides his "faithful spouse;" just as many men now have a mistress or two besides their regular wives. The tendency of civilization was to confine men more and more to one woman. Marriage was at last developed as we now have it.

If men had no property to bequeath marriage would be useless. The bastard owes his disgrace to the fact that he is born disinherited. Poverty was originally his badge of dishonor. Nature knows nothing of bastards. She has conferred some of her choicest gifts upon them—Homer, Pizzarro, William the Conqueror and others.

If men and women were free there would be no marriage problem. Those who could not live happily together could separate, while those who truly loved would remain together. The law at present interferes in marriage for the protection of property, and the happiness of millions of mankind are sacrificed to greed. Until we reform society fundamentally we will have to let the illy married worry along the best way they can. They cannot be allowed to separate under the existing order of things just because they cannot live together. To make divorce easy is to assail the institution of property, and, of course, it is better to prostitute millions of women and fill the world with their criminal offspring than to assail a thing so sacred as property. Communism is too horrible to contemplate. We must do one of three things: Make divorce difficult, make it easy, or strike a middle course. Suppose that we prohibit divorce? Then the lives of many will be failures. Suppose we make it easy; can't you see the disputes that would arise over the inheritance of property, when there are two or more sets of children? Absolute prohibition is the greatest security of property. As we make divorce easy, therefore, we make the inheritance of property uncertain, and multiply taxes by increasing the causes in the courts.

We cannot protect property without sacrificing human happiness and life; we cannot protect human happiness and life without sacrificing property. Such are the horns that gore the modern reformer.

What is the true remedy? The abolition of the law of contract and the disuse of money. How will that remedy it? By making men and women free.—Armstrong's Autonomist.

———:—:———

Much ado is made in some quarters over the fact that some of the nobob youth have volunteered for the war, but it is noticeable that all of them have soft berths, such as aide-de-camps, lieutenants, etc. One of the Astors is aide-de-camp to the governor of New York. He will probably do valiant duty in staying at home and assisting in shooting unarmed workingmen in the back, a la Hazleton.

———:—:———

A certain army officer who commanded a portion of the state militia during the railroad strike of 1894, when the railroad men captured the militia at Sacramento, has recently been looking for promotion, but McKinley (the second edition of G. Cleveland, though lacking in the boldness of the latter) says a man who can't kill off workingmen is not fit to be trusted, so his hopes of preferment are cruelly blighted.

———:—:———

Truth is the summit of being; justice is the application of it to affairs.—Emerson.

EDUCATION UNDER FREEDOM.

In none of the modern institutions do I see such a probable change for the better under freedom as in those for the education of our children. The present system was devised to educate in accordance with the ideas of capitalism. To-day we can see the most strenuous efforts in our public schools to guard against any liberality of thought. Hero worship is carried on to a surfeit, and the men who have been the cause of the most bloodshed are held up for the veneration of the pupils. Patriotism has such a hold on the whole course of instruction that the instructors seem bereft of reasoning faculties, especially when teaching such subjects as history and political economy. Notice the instillation of servitude accomplished by having the children bow down to the flag and accompany it with a declaration that they will defend the government and all of its institutions.

Then in other departments they teach them how they are to defend them, viz., by gun, sword and bayonet. This means that the only ideas on these subjects to be tolerated in this country are those that uphold the powers that exist. Any person teaching, or even having, other ideas are to be exterminated. All acts and traits of character which are in accordance with the present system are extolled and the men held up as models for the inspiration of the children.

The only just method is to present all known ideas and then appeal to the pupils to judge for themselves as to what is right. If this method were followed that latent love of justice would develop in them and not be smothered by the forced growth of patriotism and hero worship.

The method of supporting schools and the selection of teachers would be so different, and such a refreshing change as to be most desirable. Any number of families would unite and have a teacher which would seem to be best. The teacher then being the most succesful would be retained. How is it today? Any teacher knows that very few of his profession are kept in their positions by their merit. They get their positions by influence or friendship, and often are very poor excuses for teachers. The parents having children taught would arrange for the support of the instructor or under communism he would receive it from the common stock. G. H. A.

:—:—:

CANNIBALISM.

Of course we don't eat up our fellow-citizens actually, and literally, but we do it indirectly, by a roundabout method, with great ceremony and much red tape. This is how it is done: Every man's labor is the product of his life forces. Each person has only a limited amount of life force, and he needs it for himself. To rob a man of part of the product of his labor is equivalent to robbing him of his life. To deny him the opportunity to labor is to take away his right to the means of life, and is equivalent to murder. To grind down the poor in the mill of industrial slavery and rob them of nearly all they produce is just as surely cannibalism as to boil them up in a big kettle and eat them actually. The difference is that it takes longer to pick their bones, and they are expected to consent to the operation with cheerfulness.—The New Dispensation.

WORKERS SHOULD NOT GO TO WAR.

Bishop Potter, Bolton Hall, Ernest Crosby, William Dean Howells, Charles F. Adams and J. S. Crosby issued this earnest address "To the Workers of America," opposing war with Spain on these sensible and just grounds:

"The inhuman conditions which exist in Cuba have been primarily produced by that greed which gets in its work wherever man has the power to oppress his fellow-men. The cruelty exhibited in Cuba is no peculiarity of the Spanish race. Within the past few weeks instances of cruelty to negroes have occurred in this country which equal, if they do not surpass, anything which has occurred in Cuba. It is not the Spanish race especially, but the human race at large, that is cruel, and our crusade in this matter should begin at home.

"The experience of almost all the Southern American republics goes to show that oppression and disorder are often much greater under republican forms of government than under a nominal king. With the lessons of history before us, and in view of our own industrial plight, we do not hesitate to say that the Cuban workman will be scarcely better off under the insurgent government than they have been in the past. There will be a different set of land owners and exploiters, but the men who do the work will not know the difference.

"A war with Spain will put back all social improvement among us ten years, and the Cuban workmen with it. The political freedom for which they are fighting involves no such vast interests as the economic freedom which we are striving for. Could anything be more foolish than to drop the great fight and take up the smaller one? If there is a war you will furnish the corpses and the taxes, and others will get the glory. Speculators will make money out of it—that is, finally out of you. Men will get high prices for inferior supplies, for shoddy clothes and pasteboard shoes, and you will have to pay the bill, and the only satisfaction you get is the privilege of hating your Cuban-Spanish fellow-workmen, who are really your brothers, and who have had as little to do with the wrongs of Cuba as you have."

:—:—:

This glorious government of ours knows itself all right enough. And it plainly fears that recruits to its standing army will discover its make-up and desert its service, so it provides against this possibility by holding $4 a month (of the meager $13 which it allows its privates) for the first year. This teaches the soldier to be thrifty and economical. And if he deserts the government is ahead what it has regrated from its illy paid hirelings. As an extra inducement toward keeping the boys in blue in the narrow pathway of duty to the government it allows a munificent bonus of $1 a month for each month of the third year of enlistment. Just imagine a soldier deserting and forfeiting the prospect of such regal wealth, will you?

:—:

A book entitled "How to feed babies on ten cents a day" has just been published. Thus infants are met at the threshold of life by an intimation that they are not to cost much, else they must perish! Thousands of them are annually starved by the conditions generated by our competitive system.—Commonwealth.

"AN IMPREGNABLE FOUNDATION."

In writing of the association here Comrade J. W. Adams, of Liberal, Mo., says: You have laid a foundation impregnable to the assaults of a foreign foe. The only danger must come from within. Your weakness can come ONLY from the admittance into YOUR WORLD of those whose mentality is incapable of grasping the fullness of the fact that repression in any form is a perversion of human rights. He who falls short of this standard is a stumbling block to progress, no matter how anxious to break the chains that gall and chafe. Being deficient in perception, and, therefore, lacking a keen sense of justice, they are incapable of comprehending that life holds no higher happiness than that of contributing to the happiness of others, for he who renders others happy is happy himself.

:—:—:

EQUAL RIGHTS.

I think that all have equal rights or no one has any. That if anybody, or bodies, has a right to govern one in anything, they have such right in everything.

That the land belongs to the cultivator, the mine to the miner, the tool to the laborer, the product to the producer. That money should be based on all products and allowed to circulate on its merits, and that legal tender is grand larceny. That ideas belong to those who can appropriate them, and that patent rights are piracy.

Boston. DR. C. E. NICHOLS.

:—:—:

The abolition of government would make all things free. A free people would then regulate the distribution of products so that the worker or producer would derive the benefits of all things produced.

The Vanderbilts, Goulds, Astors and other tramps and parasites on the worker would then be enabled to get a job. The sweat shops would be abolished, adulteration of food would cease, for all would desire the purest obtainable. The happiness of human beings would be the trade in stock instead of their misery as now.

:—:—:

We are told that the Pullman Car Company cleared $10,000,000 last year, but the men who did the work or car building made barely enough to feed and clothe themselves. The trusts and combines, the capitalists, get the money that the fool laborer earns, and while he is toiling as a slave his masters are enjoying themselves living like princes. There have been two classes from the very beginning of history—master and slave—and those classes exist today as truly as they did when Pharaoh had the Hebrews making brick without straw on the banks of the Nile. There is such a thing as being a slave and not knowing it.—Free Lance.

:—:—:

Just stop a minute and then ask yourself this question: Why, after farmers raise food to feed the nation, and laborers manufacture goods, houses, tools, furniture and all articles of luxury, is it necessary to stand idle until a few grains of worthless sand can be dug out of the bowels of the earth to be used as a medium to exchange all these varied products one with another?—Fairbault Jeffersonian.

PEOPLE MUST OWN MACHINERY.

The steam shoveler has taken the place of the workmen in handling ore and excavating the earth. The powerful magnet handles the red-hot ingots of steel while the laborers out of a job stand around in open-mouthed wonder. In every field of production the machine is either doing, or capable of doing, the work of the laborer, and the laborer is idle. It never tires, never complains, and never goes on a strike. The owner of money owns the machine and he can dispense with the services of the man. We are at the end of the present system, and the people must own and operate the machinery for the good of all, or the people must perish or submit to absolute, hopeless slavery.—The New Woman.

:—:—:

RECEIPTS.

Nichols 25c, Smith 50c, Swarz 50c, Oliver 50c.

NEWS STANDS

WHERE DISCONTENT CAN BE OBTAINED:

San Francisco—Paper Covered Book Store, 1203 Market Street. Anarchist and Freethought literature also on sale.

MEETINGS AND HEADQUARTERS.

Social Science Club, Leer's hall, 41 E. 4th street, New York City. Free lectures and discussion in English every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock.

Group Proletariat of New York City gives Anarchist lectures Fridays at 48-52 Orchard street, and Saturdays at 21 Suffolk street.

The San Francisco (Cal.) Italian Anarchist Club meets every Saturday night at 111 Trenton street.

Anarchist Headquarters of San Francisco, 1274 Folsom street. Open every evening from 7 to 10 p. m.

Wendell Phillips Educational Club meets every Saturday at 8 p. m. at 21 Robinson street, Providence, R. I. Pamphlets in English, German, French, Jewish and Russian languages on hand.

The People's Union, a free discussion club, meets every Sunday evening at 935 Westminster street, Providence, R. I.

The New Generation, 905 South Third street, Philadelphia, Pa. Open every evening.

The Independent Educational Club meets every Sunday evening, at 7:30 o'clock, at 1727 south E street, Tacoma, Wash.

The Manhattan Liberal Club meets every Friday evening at 8 o'clock in the German Masonic temple, 220 E. 15th street, New York.

The Ohio Liberal Society meets every Sunday, at 2:45 p. m., in G. A. R. hall, 35 West 6th street, Cincinnati.

The German Group, Chicago, meets every Friday, 8 p. m., at 355 Blue Island avenue.

The International Group, Chicago, meets every Thursday, 8 p. m., at 129 Bunker street, near Desplain street. The object of the group is to spread radical literature.

The Independent Debating Club, St. Louis, 410 1-2 Market street, room 7, meets every Thursday at 8 p. m.

RADICAL PAPERS.

Progressive Thought and Dawn of Equity, Olathe, Kan., is the oldest organ of the Labor Exchange movement. It is full of L. E. news and original articles, gives progressive ideas, co-operative facts and advocates the correct way out of hard times. Send for sample copy.

Lucifer: The Light Bearer. Weekly, 8 pages, $1 per year. Light on the sex question. This is humanity's greatest need. Address M. Harman, 1304 Congress street, Chicago.

The Adult, the journal of sex: 15 John street, Bedford Row, London, W. C., England. 3d. Monthly, 3d. Post free.

Freedom, an Anarchist monthly, 30c per year. Address: 7 Lambs Conduit street, London, W. C., England.

Solidarity, an International Review of Anarchist Communism. A semi-monthly, 50 cts. a year. Address J. H. Edelman, 50 First street, New York city.

Free Society, an exponent of Anarchist Communism, 18 Oak Grove avenue, San Francisco.

THE ALTRUIST is a monthly paper, partly in phonetic spelling, and devoted to common property, united labor, mutual assistance, and equal rights. It is issued by the Altruist Community, whose members hold all their property in common and decide their business affairs by their majority vote. 25 cents a year; sample copy free. Address A. Longley, 2819 Olive St., St. Louis, Mo.

Sturmvogel, 50 First street, New York City, an Anarchist Communist paper printed in German, semi-monthly: 50 cents a year.

Freiheit, a German anarchist weekly; price $2 a year. Address 317 Genesee street, Buffalo.

La Tribune Libre, a French Anarchist weekly; price $1 per year. Address: Charleroi, Pa.